



Candidate Briefing Document

Orbital Education

Director of Corporate Development

www.orbitaled.com

July 2020

Company background

Founded by Kevin McNeany in 2005, Orbital Education is an expanding group of International schools across the globe, catering for students between the ages of 2 and 18 years. The group aim is to bring the best of British education to the world.

The schools follow a British model of education, leading to internationally recognised qualifications, adapted to support an internationally diverse student population in each location. The group owns or operates 10 international schools with additional schools opening in 2021 and 2022, all located in some of the most beautiful and culturally rich cities across the world. There are currently schools in Spain, Hungary, Slovenia, China, Russia, Ecuador and the Middle East.

Based in the UK head office in Cheshire, their highly qualified and experienced team guide and develop the schools with their expertise, supporting across a wide range of operational functions.

Orbital want students in their schools to be happy, safe, and challenged in their learning. Their schools are non-selective, and UK-qualified teachers are dedicated to working with families to support and nurture each student to achieve their potential. This may be through outstanding academic success, or by development of a student's unique talents through a range of co-curricular activities. Orbital's British schools specialise in delivering the English National Curriculum, specifically enhanced for their diverse student population and the unique context of each school's location.

The schools are also resourced to provide language support for those who are learning in English for the first time, and deliver innovative digital technology solutions to promote personalised and collaborative learning. They ensure that the highest standards are delivered with the support of Orbital experts and through accreditation bodies such as the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) and the Council of International Schools (CIS).

Orbital is an Award-Winning Group with Continuing Growth:





In recent years, the Orbital Group has received a number of business accolades recognising their success, experience, growth and development;

- The Group was honoured to receive the Queen's Award for Enterprise in International Trade, one of the most prestigious business awards in the UK. The awards celebrate the success of exciting and innovative businesses which are leading the way with pioneering products or services.
- Orbital Education was also included in The Sunday Times HSBC International Track 200 list for 2018, a ranking of Britain's Fastest growing companies across international markets.
- The Group built upon this success in 2019, ranking 35th in the Sunday Times 2019 Fasttrack list.
- They were also recognised by the London Stock Exchange Group as one of the 1,000 Companies to Inspire Britain for the 2nd year running.
- At the end of 2019, their Group CFO and Finance Director, James Stewart, received the accolade of Northern Finance Director 2019, in recognition of exceptional professional skill in the Group's finance direction and contributions to its success.

Head Office Team

The Director of Corporate Development (DCD) will join a strong, experienced and award-winning team, with specialist expertise across key areas of IT, Finance, HR, Marketing and Admissions and School Management. Working closely with Orbital colleagues and the Board of Directors, the DCD will be provided with significant opportunity to share and develop their expertise by:

- Collaborating with, and drawing upon the expertise of, colleagues in Head office and Leaders across the globe who have a wide range of expertise in both the international school market and business operations
- Extensive opportunities to travel and engage with colleagues, business contacts, and networks of influential leaders across the globe
- Enhanced professional development opportunities, through partnerships with specialist learning providers to offer recognised and accredited professional development programmes
- Opportunities for both career development and movement within the group, providing opportunity to see the world whilst progressing an attractive and rewarding career.

Director of Corporate Development Role

- To work closely with the Chairman and other members of the senior management team in formulating the plan for non-organic growth, then taking responsibility for executing the plan, building on an already successfully established platform of quality international schools, with a strong and supportive Head Office team based in Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire.
- Identify schools as potential acquisition targets in existing and target areas of operation internationally.



- Identify deal opportunities, making initial contact, building good relationships directly with and establishing a network of acquisition agents in current and new areas of operation and approach identified or recommended targets with the objective of acquisition.
- Directly approach schools or groups of schools and cultivate relationships with existing owners as potential acquisition targets, in order to become their preferred choice if/when selling.
- Attend events where intelligence may be gained and where the opportunity arises to network with competitors or professionals seeking connection. Use official support services at DIT offices, British Embassies and others. Utilise their extensive network of contacts in the sector where applicable.
- Continue to develop, promote and maximise the strong reputation that Orbital has in the international education sector. Emphasise the highly regarded education credentials throughout the organisation, from the senior management team to the school Principals and experienced British trained teachers.
- Build trust, high levels of integrity and credibility and ensure confidentiality is observed at all times.
- Participate in the acquisition process leading on market surveys, profiles of competitors and market trends.
- Work closely with other members of the senior management team during the due diligence process in order to leverage their experience and areas of expertise such as in financial modelling, planning, operations, education and site visits. It will be essential to have a collaborative approach as part of a tight-knit team who work effectively together.
- Work closely with the CFO who will take responsibility for all financial due diligence of an acquisition; ensuring an effective and smooth transition of information and relevant data is supplied to the finance team.
- Manage transfer requirements following acquisition, including working closely with the CEO post acquisition to successfully integrate new schools into the Group, following the proven template. Also, manage the operational transfer of newly acquired schools, including ownership of licences and TUPE of staff. It will be vital to maintain a high level of understanding and assessment of regulatory issues affecting the schools in each region.
- Work closely with and have a good understanding of the importance of Heads/Principals during the acquisition and integration process.
- Generally, identify and relate to professionals likely to be of assistance in achieving Orbital's goals, such as inward investment agencies like Bahrain EDB.
- Have a working knowledge of the regulatory environment and major obstacles to success in key markets.

Requirements

Orbital are looking for an experienced proven Corporate Development Director who has the following:

- Educated to degree level ideally.
- High calibre, mature individual with several years of experience in the international education sector is preferable.
- Strong track record of participating in a successful buy and build.



- Have a detailed and sound experience of at least one geographical region of sector operations, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America being preferred areas.
- Have a full understanding and experience of school budgeting and finance and have an appreciation of the demands and uses of Private Equity and banking support.
- Experienced at identifying profitable deals with financial potential and sifting through many others to find the best: someone who thinks through the future value of situations and can balance short-term and long-term gains.
- Ability to represent the Orbital brand at all times to the highest standards.
- This is not purely a desk- based role as it will require an enthusiasm for, and willingness to travel extensively internationally in order to develop strong and close relationships with key contacts.
- Solid communication skills, able to form strong and empathetic relationships with key connections, in order to become regarded as their first-choice partner for a potential sale or development opportunity.
- Ability to operate in a confidential manner, aware of any sensitivities around a potential acquisition and can handle any issues with discretion.
- Self-starting, hard-working, willing to work alone, although part of a close-knit team, and travel extensively as required.
- Strong interpersonal skills able to gain the trust and respect of the international school and wider community.
- Will be a team player with no ego, no office politics, operates in a transparent manner and is flexible to learn about the business.
- Will be comfortable working in a well- established and highly regarded business and helping grow it within the next 5 years; will see this as a challenge and a great opportunity.

Location

The role will be based at the Head Office in Cheadle Hulme, with extensive international travel as required.

Remuneration

To be discussed. This is a significant senior opportunity to:

- Become part of a team committed to excellence for the benefit of all students.
- Be part of a global community, collaborating with influential individuals and leaders worldwide.
- Benefit from opportunities for professional growth and continuous improvement in practice.
- Realise openings for career development and movement within the network.

Nicky Buckland

nicky@cobaltpartners.com

00 44 7891325516

